

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method of creating a marketplace with hosted supplier stores comprising the steps
2 of:
3 providing tools for creating and managing a hosted supplier store to each of a
4 plurality of suppliers through a commerce site, said tools including a catalog
5 facility for uploading and managing a supplier catalog for said hosted
6 supplier store;
7 receiving a plurality of supplier catalogs from said plurality of suppliers;
8 aggregating said plurality of supplier catalogs into an aggregated catalog; and
9 providing a buyer with access to said aggregated catalog on said commerce site.

- 1 2. The method of claim 1, further including:
2 providing a supplier hub catalog topology; and
3 wherein said step of aggregating includes aggregating said supplier catalogs
4 according to said supplier hub catalog topology.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein:
2 said supplier catalogs include shared marketplace products and supplier-specific
3 products;
4 said buyer accesses said aggregated catalog through one of said hosted supplier
5 stores owned by one of said suppliers; and
6 said step of aggregating includes aggregating said shared marketplace products from
7 all of said suppliers with said supplier-specific products from said one of said
8 suppliers.

1 4. The method of claim 1, further including:
2 receiving contract data from one of said suppliers, said contract data including
3 entitlement information for said buyer in relation to a product; and
4 wherein the step of providing said buyer with access includes filtering said
5 aggregated catalog based upon said entitlement information.

1 5. The method of claim 4, further including:
2 receiving a buyer request for said product; and
3 wherein said step of filtering includes identifying hosted supplier stores offering said
4 product, identifying eligible contracts within said identified hosted supplier
5 stores, retrieving entitlement information from said eligible contracts, and
6 applying said retrieved entitlement information, wherein said entitlement
7 information includes pricing.

1 6. The method of claim 1, further including the steps of:
2 providing said buyer with trading mechanisms for generating orders for items within
3 said aggregated catalog;
4 developing requests for quotations for made-to-order items; and
5 negotiating contracts between said suppliers and said buyers.

1 7. A computer program having a computer-readable medium tangibly embodying
2 computer executable instructions for creating a marketplace with hosted supplier stores, the
3 computer executable instructions comprising:

4 computer executable tools for creating and managing a hosted supplier store
5 through a commerce site, said tools including a catalog facility for uploading
6 and managing a supplier catalog for said hosted supplier store;

7 computer executable instructions for receiving a plurality of supplier catalogs from
8 said plurality of suppliers;

9 computer executable instructions for aggregating said plurality of supplier catalogs
10 into an aggregated catalog; and

11 computer executable instructions for providing a buyer with access to said
12 aggregated catalog on said commerce site.

1 8. The computer program of claim 7, further including:

2 computer executable instructions defining a supplier hub catalog topology; and

3 wherein said computer executable instructions for aggregating include computer
4 executable instructions for aggregating said supplier catalogs according to
5 said supplier hub catalog topology.

1 9. The computer program of claim 7, wherein :
2 said supplier catalogs include shared marketplace products and supplier-specific
3 products;
4 said buyer accesses said aggregated catalog through one of said hosted supplier
5 stores owned by one of said suppliers; and
6 said computer executable instructions for aggregating include computer executable
7 instructions for aggregating said shared marketplace products from all of
8 said suppliers with said supplier-specific products from said one of said
9 suppliers.

1 10. The computer program of claim 7, further including:
2 computer executable instructions for receiving contract data from one of
3 said suppliers, said contract data including entitlement information for said buyer in
4 relation to a product; and
5 wherein said computer executable instructions for providing said buyer
6 access to said aggregated catalog includes computer executable instructions for
7 filtering said aggregated catalog based upon said entitlement information.

- 1 11. The computer program of claim 10, further including:
2 computer executable instructions for receiving a buyer request for said
3 product; and
4 wherein said computer executable instructions for filtering include computer
5 executable instructions for identifying hosted supplier stores offering said product,
6 identifying eligible contracts within said identified hosted supplier stores, retrieving
7 entitlement information from said eligible contracts, and applying said retrieved
8 entitlement information, wherein said entitlement information includes pricing.
- 1 12. The computer program of claim 7, further including the steps of:
2 computer executable instructions for providing said buyer with trading mechanisms
3 for generating orders for items within said aggregated catalog;
4 developing requests for quotations for made-to-order items; and
5 negotiating contracts between said suppliers and said buyers.

1 13. A system for online commerce between multiple buyers and multiple suppliers, the
2 system comprising:

3 a member subsystem for registering buyers and suppliers, whereby registered buyers
4 are permitted to access said system for online commerce, and registered
5 suppliers are permitted to access said system to create and manage a hosted
6 supplier store;

7 a database having stored thereon a plurality of supplier catalogs uploaded by said
8 registered suppliers for a plurality of said hosted supplier stores;

9 a catalog subsystem for aggregating said plurality of supplier catalogs into an
10 aggregated catalog; and

11 an application server for providing said registered buyers with access to said
12 aggregated catalog on said commerce site.

1 14. The system of claim 13, wherein said database further includes a defined supplier hub
2 catalog topology, and wherein said catalog subsystem aggregates said supplier catalogs
3 according to said supplier hub catalog topology.

1 15. The system of claim 13, wherein:
2 said supplier catalogs include shared marketplace products and supplier-specific
3 products;
4 said registered buyer accesses said aggregated catalog through one of said hosted
5 supplier stores owned by one of said registered suppliers; and
6 said catalog subsystem aggregates said shared marketplace products from all of said
7 registered suppliers with said supplier-specific products from said one of
8 said registered suppliers.

1 16. The system of claim 13, further comprising:
2 a contracts subsystem including contract data received from one of said registered
3 suppliers, said contract data including entitlement information for said
4 registered buyer in relation to a product; and
5 wherein said contract subsystem filters said aggregated catalog based upon said
6 entitlement information before said application server provides said
7 registered buyer with access to said filtered aggregated catalog.

1 17. The system of claim 16, wherein said entitlement information includes item pricing
2 information.

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1 18. The system of claim 13, further comprising a trading subsystem providing a
2 transaction mechanism adapted for said registered buyers to generate orders for items within
3 said aggregated catalog, develop requests for quotations for made-to-order items, and to
4 negotiate contracts with said suppliers.

1 19. An online marketplace for commerce between multiple buyers and multiple suppliers,
2 said online marketplace comprising:

3 a plurality of hosted supplier stores each managed by a respective registered
4 supplier, said hosted supplier stores each including a supplier catalog
5 containing a hierarchy of categories, products, and saleable items uploaded
6 by said respective registered supplier;

7 an aggregated catalog containing a hierarchy of categories, products, and items that
8 includes an aggregation of said supplier catalogs;

9 trading mechanisms, including item ordering and requests for quotations for items;

10 and

11 a supplier hub through which a registered buyer browses said aggregated catalog
12 and utilizes said trading mechanisms.

1 20. The online marketplace of claim 19, further including:
2 a plurality of contracts between registered buyers and registered suppliers, each of
3 said contracts including entitlement information for one of said registered
4 buyer in relation to a product of one of said registered suppliers; and
5 an entitlement-based filter for filtering said aggregated catalog based upon said
6 entitlement information for a selected registered buyer, thereby enforcing
7 one of said contracts.

1 21. A computer-readable data signal for propagation in a medium, the signal comprising
2 computer-readable code for providing a marketplace with hosted supplier stores, the
3 computer-readable code including:

4 means for creating and managing a hosted supplier store through a commerce
5 site, said means for creating and managing including a catalog facility for
6 uploading and managing a supplier catalog for said hosted supplier store;
7 means for uploading a supplier catalog to said hosted supplier store; and
8 means for receiving an aggregated catalog, whereby said aggregated catalog is an
9 aggregation of said supplier catalog with other supplier catalogs
10 associated with other hosted supplier stores, and a buyer is provided
11 access to said aggregated catalog on said commerce site.

1 22. The computer-readable data signal of claim 21, further including:
2 means for specifying a supplier hub catalog topology, and
3 wherein said aggregated catalog is an aggregation of said supplier catalog and
4 said other supplier catalogs according to said supplier hub catalog
5 topology.

1 23. The computer-readable data signal of claim 21, wherein:
2 said supplier catalogs include shared marketplace products and supplier-specific
3 products;
4 said buyer accesses said aggregated catalog through one of said hosted supplier
5 stores owned by one of said suppliers; and
6 said aggregated catalog includes said shared marketplace products from all of said
7 suppliers with said supplier-specific products from said one of said suppliers.

1 24. The computer-readable data signal of claim 21, further including:
2 means for receiving contract data from one of said suppliers, said contract data
3 including entitlement information for said buyer in relation to a product;
4 and
5 wherein said aggregated catalog provided for said buyer is filtered based upon
6 said entitlement information.

1 25. The computer-readable data signal of claim 21, further including:
2 means for generating orders for items within said aggregated catalog;
3 developing requests for quotations for made-to-order items, and
4 negotiating contracts between said suppliers and said buyers.